



A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D A T

St NICHOLAS'S CHURCH in *Newcastle,*

B E F O R E T H E

G O V E R N O R S

O F T H E

I N F I R M A R T.



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The Doctrine and Example of our SAVIOUR, publickly conspicuous in doing GOOD to Mankind. //

A
S E R M O N
PREACHED AT
St NICHOLAS'S CHURCH in *Newcastle*,
BEFORE THE
G O V E R N O R S
OF THE
I N F I R M A R Y,
For the COUNTIES of
Durham, Newcastle, and Northumberland,
On WEDNESDAY *June 27, 1753.*

BEING
Their ANNIVERSARY MEETING, appointed
for returning Thanks to Almighty GOD, for the
singular Success he hath been pleased to give to this
Charity: And to supplicate the Continuance of His
Blessings hereafter.

By ROBERT PARKER, D. D.
Rector of *Elwick*, in the Bishoprick of *Durham*.

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*The DOCTRINE and EXAMPLE of
our SAVIOUR publickly conspicuous in
doing GOOD to Mankind.*

MATTHEW ix. 11, 22.

*When the Pharisees saw it, they said unto
his Disciples, Why eateth your Master
with Publicans and Sinners?*

*But when Jesus heard that, he said unto
them, They that be Whole need not a
Physician, but they that are Sick.*



OUR Saviour having called
from the Receipt of Custom
Matthew, his Disciple, to
the Work of the Gospel; ✕
and being in a House with him and others
of the same or like Employment, was seen

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by some of the *Pharisees*. They were a Sort of *Jews*, much addicted to a scrupulous Observance of the Law of *Moses*. And by Virtue of that legal Righteousness, they were apt to think highly of their own Sanctity, esteeming themselves too Good to have any Regard for Heathens and Sinners. They seem therefore surprised and offended to find our Saviour in Company with People, whom they so much disliked. Whereupon, they asked his Disciples: *Why eateth your Master with Publicans and Sinners?* i. e. What meaneth your Master, who taketh upon him the Character of Messiah and Son of God, that he deigneth to eat with such exceptionable Companions? Then the Lord Jesus, with the Meekness of Heavenly Wisdom, answered: *They that be Whole need not a Physician, but they that are Sick:* i. e. I go to them, because I came to save that which was lost; and they who

who have Infirmities of Body and Mind,
are the proper Objects of my Care.

THUS the Words of the Text shew us,

FIRST, That Opinions and Notions
may possibly be against what is Good and
Wise, and warranted by the highest Au-
thority.

SECONDLY, That to take Care of
them, who are afflicted with Infirmities of
Body and Mind, and have most Need of
our Comfort; is to do according to the
Doctrine and Example of Jesus Christ.

FIRST, Opinions and notions may
possibly be against what Good and
Wise, and warranted by the highest Au-
thority: *When the Pharisees saw it, they
said, &c.*

THAT Good and Evil naturally differ
from each other, all Men agree. And that

Difference they can discern, just as by their bodily Eyes they distinguish Colours, and by their Ears Sounds. When the eternal Truths of Morality, when the great Duties of loving God and Man, are declared to them, they have a conscious Sense upon their Minds, answerable to those Doctrines. So that by their Affections they are disposed, by their very Reason they are prompted to approve Works of true Piety and Charity. But it is to be observed, that during the Time of their earthly Life, Men are frail and fallible Creatures: That their moral Sense of Good and Evil, may be much impaired by Faults of Education, Company, Example, and by vicious Habits; and then in consequence thereof, the Light of Reason which is in them comes to be comparatively as Darkness: The Thoughts of the Heart, the very Mind and Conscience being depraved with wrong Affections and Perceptions.

W I T H Regard to the Will of God revealed

vealed to us in his holy Word, there must be a proper Frame of Mind in them who with true Faith receive it; else it may appear, as it did to the *Jews* a stumbling Block, and to the *Greeks* Foolishness. *He* Heb. xi. 6. *that cometh to God must believe that he is.* And *no Man can come to me*, saith our Sa- John vi. 44. *viour, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* For if there be not a good Disposition to do the Will of God, how shall the Doctrine be known to be of God?

INSTRUCTED now by those Oracles of God in his Scripture of Truth, we may perceive that Purposes of great Good towards Men, are not alike discernible to all: That to some perhaps for a Time their Usefulness or their Expedience shall look like Inventions of little or no Value. The Gospel which is the Wisdom and Power of God publickly vouched by Miracles, was for some Ages overshadowed with the Cloud of Heathen Idolatry; till in the Fulness of

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came *Germ*

Time those false Delusions gave Way to the Acknowledgment of the Truth. How various at first were the Opinions touching the Great Salvation in Christ! Some from Hearsay had taken an Aversion to it; because, concerning that Doctrine they knew every where it was spoken against: Others from partial Considerations, or worldly Interests, judging of the Author of our

John i. 46. Faith said: Can there any good Thing
vii. 14. come out of Nazareth? He deceiveth the

John xii. People: He doth not cast out Devils but by
Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils. With

such Imputations was that gracious Design of Mercy for a Time slighted: Nevertheless Wisdom was justified. Ill Surmises and Suspicions after a while ceased; and then was he approved the very Christ, who came from God and wrought Miracles to

heal them that were Sick of divers Diseases: Then he whom the Gainfayers had called the Friend of Publicans and Sinners, appeared to be indeed the Saviour of Mankind,

kind, who visited such as had Infirmities of Body and Mind, because they were capable of the Amendment which he came to give.

HENCE we may truly collect that Designs most beneficent seldom, if ever, prove agreeable and acceptable alike to all Sorts of People; because their Interests and Sentiments being divers, they do not in the same Light behold Schemes of excellent Wisdom. This charitable Work, however, which we are here assembled to recommend and to advance, praised be God! hath not been obstructed by many of those Difficulties and Delays: Nay, rather especially favoured of Heaven we have cause to believe it hath been, remembering how many were ready to distribute, willing to communicate, although in other Respects their Conditions and Sentiments were different. How greatly was the Hand of Providence manifested to raise a House of Mercy here for

the Sick and Poor ; when such a Number of bounteous and chearful Benefactors freely gave their Help, laying aside all Party Dissentions to order to unite in so good a Work ! Whilst other Designs of true Beneficence have been obstructed by irreconcilable Opinions and Interests. This merciful Design hath had the Happiness to find willing and friendly Acceptance when first offered to the Publick ; which is indeed a Proof very honourable to this Country, that Wealth is placed in the Hands of those who have a Mind disposed to make good Use of it.

ANSWERABLE to this Beginning hath been the successful Continuance of our Infirmary. And we faithfully trust God's Blessing, and the Benevolence of those who delight in Mercy shall compleat and perpetuate it. In Truth, we have great Reason for these Hopes, seeing that the Scheme of this Charity hath been ordered with such Prudence, Vigilance, Integrity and Unanimity,

mity, as to obtain a general Approbation: Yet, if any Persons think they have just Objections either against our Design or Oeconomy; fancying perhaps that it hath not all the Perfection it might have: They should do well to consider with themselves, what human Institution can be perfectly free from Faults, or seeming Faults: They might perceive how plausible Objections may be founded on Hearsay and Misrepresentations. How exceedingly improbable it is there should be Abuses or wrong Management, where Persons of the most clear, the most respectable Character are pleased to have the Care of Government, purely for the Love of God and of their Fellow Creatures. Whatever Doubts, or Suspicions, or Rumours, may have been against this Fellowship of Charity: If any such have been, let this Fact be justly weighed against them, of which there is undoubted Assurance: That a great deal of Good hath actually been done to many who were trou-

troubled with Sicknefs and Poverty; who had Infirmities of Body and Mind, and must owe their Relief to the Beneficence of others.

WE come now to the second Paricular of the Text: That to take Care of them who are afflicted with Infirmities of Body and Mind, and have most need of our Comfort, is to do according to the Doctrine and Example of Jesus Christ. *But when Jesus heard that he said unto them, they that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.*

TO all who name the Name of Christ this is an affecting Consideration: And to us especially who are here this Day met together; because, it properly shews that the charitable Institution we are now endeavouring to promote, is founded on evangelical Truth. To this Purpose we may observe, that the antient Prophets, and *Isaiab*, in particular speaking of the Age of
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the *Messiah*, ascribe to it the Power of Healing: *Then the Eyes of the Blind shall* Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. *be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped: Then shall the lame Man leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb ~~shall~~* By this Token he was to be signalized for the very Person who should set up a Kingdom never to be destroyed, and should make Reconciliation Mat. iv. 23. for Sin. And so we find when he called Men to Repentance, he cured all Manner of Sicknefs, and all Manner of Disease. When it is declared how God anointed Jesus of *Nazareth* with the holy Ghost and with Power; it is said in Effect he did Good, doing Cures on the Sick. Moreover when he commanded the Gospel to be published throughout the World, among his other Instructions, was that of healing the Sick. And we have Reason to believe, he meant that healing should some Time be wrought by the usual Applications of Medicine upon the Poor who had need of such cha-

charitable Relief. For, besides that he saith, they that be Sick have need of the Physician; we find he proposeth to Imitation the good *Samaritan*, who pouring in Oil and Wine, bound up the Wounds of the Man that fell among Thieves, and was left half dead: Who bound up his Wounds, and likewise was at Expence to have him taken Care of. And withal 'tis very remarkable, that when our Saviour mentions the Works meet for Repentance and Salvation, which he will most require at the Judgment of the great Day, visiting the Sick, which may imply both the giving of Medicines, and the administering of spiritual Consolation: Visiting the Sick is one of the Offices of Charity, which with the choicest Beatitudes he will reward.

WITH this Doctrine and Practice of our Saviour, if we compare the House of Mercy here instituted, we shall find it formed with very good Agreement to his Plan of Beneficence. For the original Design of
it

it was, and the Effect of it hath been by voluntary Association and divers Sorts of Benefaction to provide for the Sick and lame Poor: And most especially for those at all Times, who by sudden Accidents might be maimed and helpless. The Benefit of this Infirmary is freely given to all, who are worthy and proper Objects, without any sinister Regard to Party Distinctions civil or religious. And what shews it to be perfectly agreeable to the Spirit of the Gospel, is the Provision it makes for the Distempers of the Soul as well as of the Body. It gives Meat to the Hungry, Drink to the Thirsty, Clothes to the Naked, and Visiting to the Sick. With such a true Sense of Piety it hath been regulated, that particular Thanks to the Almighty are to be rendered publickly by every one there restored to Health: And a general Thanksgiving once a Year is to be solemnized, as on this Day, for the Blessings of his Providence already vouchsafed,

safed, and to supplicate the Continuance of
 them: *That God in all Things may be glo-*
rified through Jesus Christ.

AND what is the Consequence of this
 pious and charitable Design? It hath some
 Reward following it in this World. The
 Rich here serve the Poor, 'tis true: Yet
 10 at the same Time, both the Publick and
 10 Private Well is promoted. The Science
 of Medicine is thereby improved in its se-
 veral Branches: Which Improvement may
 be salutary to the Richest of Men, as it has
 been to the Poorest. And it is a Fact wor-
 thy of our Notice, that every one of the
 Sick and Lame, who are restored to their
 Health, to their Family, and to their
 Friends by the Help of this Charity; and
 are then honestly and usefully employed in
 10 their Callings, are an Addition to the Pu-
 blick Opulence, Commerce and Security,
 wherein we are all of us concerned.

WHAT

W H A T hath been said, I trust, may help to shew, that the Publick Infirmary *p* here founded, is very agreeable to true Religion, is warranted by the perfect Precepts and Example of our Saviour: Let me exhort you therefore all that are here present, to befriend this truly Christian Work, according to the Opportunity you have, with your Aid and Encouragement. They that are already Contributors and Benefactors, I persuade myself, will esteem this a Consideration of great Concern to them, that they adorn the Doctrine of God and our Saviour with their Inspection and Munificence, with their Advice and Attendance. And I trust others likewise seeing their good Works, and hearing their good Word will be excited to add their Bounty towards perfecting and supplying the Goodly E- *g* difice, which this charitable Society hath built and appropriated to the Poor: Even to those Representatives of Jesus Christ, *C 2*

at. xxvi. Christ; which he hath said: *Ye have al-*
ways with you.

AND lest any of us should in any Sort
be weary of this good Work; you will
give me Leave to mind you of what is
told us in the Name of God. We are all
of us subject to Accidents and Infirmities;
neither know we how soon and to whom
may be sent the Terror by Night, or the
Arrow that flieth by Day. 'Tis a com-
fortable Saying therefore that is written:

Psalm xli.
1, 3.

*Blessed is he that considereth the Poor and
Needy: The Lord shall deliver him in
Time of Trouble.——The Lord comfort
him when he lieth sick upon his Bed:
Make Thou all his Bed in his Sickness.*

Heb. xiii.
16.

What Man is he that hath not offended
against God, and hath not Sins to be for-
given? The Means available towards Par-
don thus are described. *To do Good, and to
distribute forget not, for with such Sacrifi-*

2 Pet. iv. 8

*ces God is well pleased. Charity shall
cover*

cover the Multitude of Sins. The merciful Prov. xi. 17.
Man doth Good to his own Soul. Blessed
are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mat. v. 7.
Mercy. What have any of us that we
 have not received? It is all the Bounty
 of Heaven; the free Gift of Him in whom
 we live, and move, and have our being.
 It is charge also to *them that are rich in* 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.
this World, that they trust in the living
God, who giveth us richly all Things to
enjoy: That they do Good, that they be
rich in good Works. And in so doing,
 they may be sure, they shall in no Wise
 lose their Reward. For *God loveth a* 2 Cor. ix. 7.
cheerful Giver: His blessed Son and our
 Saviour hath said: *In as much as ye have* Mat. xxv. 40.
done it unto one of the least of these my
Brethren, ye have done it unto me.

YET these further Aids of Charity we
 ask at the same Time, that we gladly ac-
 knowledge with all Thankfulness, the Be-
 nefits already received. The very purpose
 of

F of this Ann^eversary Festival is, to render
8 ~~render~~ most humble and hearty Thanks to
Almighty God, for the singular Success
wherewith he hath prospered this Work of
Christian Piety: And because his Blessing
hath been granted chiefly through the Mi-
nisty of his Servants, whom he hath set
in Authority over us; therefore it becom-
eth us well, to declare our Gratitude here,
to our gracious Sovereign, whose Reign hath
been distinguished by these publick Chari-
f table Foundations, which witness the Good-
ness of his Government, and his Fatherly
Care of his People. And considering how
the Blessings of divine Providence have been
vouched to our Infirmary, we gladly own
our Obligations to the Father of our
Church, who favoureth with his peculiar
Inspection, this Provision for the Sick and
lame Poor: * And hath himself most clear-
ly manifested the Evengical Reasonableness
of

* See Lord Bishop of Durham's Sermon, preached before
the President and Governors, of the London Infirmary,
1751.

of the Institution. Next to all in general, the Contributors and Benefactors to this Infirmary, according to their respective Dignities and Distinctions; especially to the Presidents, the Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, the Governors we pay our grateful Acknowledgments: Furthermore to all and every of those, who have been concerned, either in giving Medicines to relieve the bodily Infirmities of the Sick, or in administering Christian Comfort to the Feeble-minded, with the sacred Offices of Religion, we render the Thanks of them that have been, and that are Pertakers of this Charity; and withall, the Thanks of this Charitable Society. of c

BUT to God alone, appertaineth the Glory of all: To him let us offer our Thanksgiving and Praise, for the good Christian Services, which have been done by the Benefit of this Infirmary, to relieve Sufferings, to cure Meladies, to give Health to the Sick, and Comfort to the Afflicted.

Of

Of him with devout Supplication, let us
beg the Blessing of Heaven upon this
Work of Charity, and every one of its
Benefactors.

A N D now to the all-bounteous
Giver of every good and perfect Gift, to
God the Father the Son, and the holy
Ghost be ascribed, all Honour and Power,
Majesty and Dominion, for ever and ever,
Amen.

F I N I S



